

Seven Hills Writing Contest

Tallahassee Writers Association

Category: Children's Literature: Picture Books

Children's Picture Books are targeted toward children ages 4-8. Writers are submitting only the text that would accompany artwork in a published book.

Scale: 5 Excellent 4 Very Good 3 Fair 2 Needs Work 1 Poor

- ___ 1. MECHANICS - Do word count and format conform to contest rules? Is manuscript free of grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors? Is a target age group specified?
- ___ 2. HOOK - Is the reader drawn into the story/character from the beginning?
- ___ 3. CHARACTERS - Are they interesting? Does the protagonist have human weaknesses which make them real, as well as strengths to resolve the story's conflict? Are antagonists one-dimensional "cartoon" figures, or do they have enough positive qualities to make them real? Do we get a sense of their motivation?
- ___ 4. TECHNIQUE - Is the point of view consistent? Is there a proper balance between showing and telling? Does the active voice predominate over the passive?
- ___ 5. LANGUAGE USE - Is the writing fresh and playful, free of cliches? Does the choice of words keep the reader embedded in the story? Does the writer rely on strong nouns and verbs rather than adjectives and adverbs?
- ___ 6. DIALOGUE AND NARRATIVE - Does any dialogue sound natural to the characters and the situation?
- ___ 7. SETTING - Does the reader know where and when the story takes place? Can you see, feel, hear and smell the setting? Does it enhance or detract from the story?
- ___ 8. CONFLICT/OBSTACLES – Is the protagonist presented with a need/desire to solve a problem, and obstacles preventing their fulfillment? Are motivations of both protagonist and antagonists strong enough to provide conflict worth reading about?
- ___ 9. RESOLUTION - Does the protagonist grow or learn something during the course of the story? Is there an "aha" moment when the new reality becomes apparent?
- ___ 10. STRUCTURE – Does the structure of the story suit the material? Did the writer find the best entry and exit point? Is every scene necessary?
- ___ 11. ORIGINALITY – Does the story seem fresh and original? Does it have its own twists on character, plot, and setting that make it unique?